



SCOTT ALLEN

REPRESENTATIVE • 97TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

For Immediate Release

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Contact: Representative Scott Allen

(608) 266-8580

Fare Box Fairness proposed as Budget Amendment

Representatives Scott Allen (R-Waukesha), Cody Horlacher (R-Mukwonago), Bob Kulp (R-Stratford) and David Murphy (R-Greenville) submitted key legislative language aimed at transit subsidies as a budget amendment today. As one of the first initiatives this session addressing Department of Transportation (DOT) spending, the Fare Box Fairness proposal gradually raises the fare box revenue ratio to 25% by 2021, capping taxpayer losses for operating expenses at 75%.

"This is a pro-transit bill because every dollar we give to a less successful system is a dollar we can't invest in a more successful one," said Rep. Allen. "The current system is not fair or sustainable in the long term."

Transit systems below the 25% threshold cost taxpayers more than \$48 million in 2016 alone. Currently, there is no statutory standard for fare box collections, which means, theoretically, transit systems could operate without charging for rides at all. DOT administrative rules regarding transit system efficiency are convoluted and weak. Under current regulation, no transit system in Wisconsin has ever received a penalty for failing to meet goals, despite some transit systems operating at 80-90% losses for decades.

"Transit systems in Colorado, Maryland, California, and Illinois all have some form of fare box revenue ratio standards, and are, for the most part, above what we propose here," Rep. Allen said. "Transit subsidies are beneficial to some urban economies, and it is appropriate that users contribute to the cost of operation. We should simply cap taxpayer subsidies."

If adopted, the proposal would save taxpayers at least \$6 million over the next two years.

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*The 97th Assembly District includes portions of the City of Waukesha
and the Towns of Waukesha, Genesee, and Mukwonago.*